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ABSTRACT

This paper begins with an overview of necessary word recognition skills and the debate between use of phonics versus whole language. The paper gives a useful 5-step strategy for decoding unfamiliar words: (1) use context clues; (2) try the sound of the initial consonant, vowel, or blend in addition to context clues; (3) check for structural clues; (4) use phonics generalizations to sound out as much of the word as necessary; and (5) consult the dictionary. It then discusses phonics integrated with content from reading, contends that there are suitable times to teach phonics, and outlines some basic principles in teaching phonics. The paper emphasizes that phonics should be taught as a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. The paper then discusses the different philosophies of phonics instruction: advocates of the basics believe that there is a core of phonics principles and generalizations that students should learn and use, while there are other teachers who emphasize a strong program of phonics instruction with a well-developed scope and sequence. Individualized reading, a holistic approach in reading instruction, is also discussed in the paper, as is behaviorism and the reading curriculum. The paper concludes with a consideration of objectives in the teaching of reading. (NKA)

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# Phonics in the Teaching of Reading.

by Marlow Ediger

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## PHONICS IN THE TEACHING OF READING

Word recognition skills help readers identify words while reading. One skill is sight word recognition, the development of a store of words a person can recognize immediately on sight. Use of context clues to help in word identification involves using the surrounding words to decode an unfamiliar word. Both semantic and syntactic clues can be helpful. Phonics, the association of speech sounds (phonemes) with printed symbols (graphemes), is very helpful in identifying unfamiliar words, even thought the sound-symbol associations in English are not completely consistent. Structural analysis skills enable readers to decode unfamiliar words using units larger than single graphemes. The process of structural analysis involves recognition of prefixes, suffixes inflectional endings, contractions, and compound words, a well as syllabication and accent. Dictionaries can also be used for word identification. The dictionary respelling that appears in parentheses after the word supplies the word's pronunciation, but the reader has to know how to use the dictionary's pronunciation key to interpret the respellings appropriately.

Children need to learn to use all of the word recognition skills. Because they will need different skills for different situations, they must also learn to use the skills appropriately

An overall strategy for decoding unfamiliar words is useful. the following five step strategy is a good one to teach: (1) use context clues; (2) try the sound of the initial consonant, vowel, or blend in addition to context clues; (3) check for structural clues; (4) use phonics generalizations to sound out as much of the word as necessary; and (5) consult the dictionary (Burns, Roe, and Ross, 1996, 152-153).

There is considerable debate pertaining to how much phonics

should be taught in the reading curriculum. Whole language approaches tend to minimize the teaching of phonics. Advocates of whole language believe that pupils will learn to read well when holism in content read is emphasized. For example, pupils together with the teacher here look at a Big Book that all can see clearly to discuss the illustrations. This activity assists pupils to obtain background information so that the resulting print will be understood better. Pupils also speculate on what the print material in the Big Book will be about. The pulls and the teacher then read aloud the contents in the Big Book. Pupils may see the printed words as the oral reading activity progresses. If they do know them or they don't, pulls can determine what each word is through reading aloud together and follow along in the print material. Rereading is recommended since all pupils have their favorite stories and like to hear them again. Before I was able to read to myself, I liked to hear the Katzenjammer Kids comic strip read over and over again. The contents therein were quite predictable since the Katzenjammer Kids always did something mischievous; the father and the captain never liked to work while mama did all the work.

Big Books read with children should contain predictable content in that pupils have security in knowing something about what will happen in the story. With rereading and predicable content, pupils learn to identify many words. These identified words become sight words. With a core of sight words in the repertoire, pupils may then read content at a more sophisticated level. With the Big Book approach, pupils are not hindered in sequential thinking when attempting to recognize an unknown word. Enjoyment of the story being read should then be in the offing. If pupils are stumbling along with word recognition, they may learn to dislike the act of reading. Rather, pupils need to focus upon interesting content contained in the Big Book. There are teachers who teach some phonics along with Big Book use. Thus, there may be games that pupils play in phonics related directly to the content read. Pupils then study words which have the same beginning letter and sound. They may compare short and long vowel sounds in words

following a pattern such as: cap---cape, hat--hate, fat--fate, nap--nape, and can, cane, among others. Teachers in whole language also stress words that end alike and words that rhyme. By having pupils find which word, for example, starts like 'bat," pupils may enjoy the phonics learning activity. It is not drill in a complete scope and sequence program of phonics, but rather learners locate words with a pattern and these words came from print materials read.

Phonics Integrated with Content from Reading

The view that reading consists of its simultaneous application of many different skills has important implications for our understanding of the successes and failures that readers experience as well as the kinds of educational programs that we should implement. The reason for this is that in reading, as in all cognitive activities, there are many roads that lead to Rome. There are many paths to successful reading and hence many paths to successful reading instruction. On the one hand, failure to read may result from deficiencies in any of the subskills of literacy. On the other hand, readers with strong skills in one facet of reading are bound to be able to to compensate for possible weaknesses in other skills. We already have seen, for example, how second language readers use their comprehension and inferential skills to compensate for for a lack of vocabulary and word identification skills. Thus, it is true that readers not only can can fail to accomplish literacy for many different reasons, but also can succeed for different reasons (Van Den Broek, 1996).

I do not agree with a phonics program that has a scope and sequence of its own whereby lesson after lesson emphasizes phonics. Why? 1. The lessons become much too abstract for young pulls on the primary grade levels. 2. phonics is separated from the act of reading whereby reading for ideas should be the key component of a quality reading program. 3. pupils experience much drill when phonics becomes a separate subject area. 4. teachers find it difficult to obtain pupil interests in sequential lessons in phonics. 5. learners have a

difficult time to determine reasons for all the emphasis upon "How" to read.

An approach in the teaching of phonics needs to stress reading for content and ideas as well as mastering key concepts pertaining to word recognition. There needs to be rational balance between whole language and phonics. Now we are left with the problem of what makes for balance between the two---- phonics and whole language. I would give much more importance to reading for ideas as compared to phonics. Why? We read to secure ideas, not to associate sounds with symbols. Relating sounds to symbols emphasizes keys to unlocking unknown words. It is not an end in and of itself. Phonics should never be taught as an end, but it is a means to an end. I asked a teacher where I supervised student teachers in the public schools why she was teaching much phonics when several pupils revealed excellent oral reading skills. The teacher stated that these good readers made mistakes on some phonic elements-- diphthongs and vowel digraphs-- on a standardized test. These good readers, the teacher felt, needed to master what had been missed. I asked the teacher if the good readers showed fluency in oral reading and adequate comprehension when discussing the story content. The teacher stated that knowing phonics rules and generalizations in depth are musts for all children. I continued the conversation by asking which is more important phonics or comprehension. She replied quickly with "phonics." Her thinking was that she had become a good reader due to the teacher being a very strong advocate in the teaching of phonics. That teacher was the role model for the teacher I was conversing with. It is difficult to change the thinking of some teachers about the role of phonics in the reading curriculum. If phonics knowledge and use is more important than being a tool to unlock unknown words, then we are stuck with a strong scope and sequence program in phonics. Phonics then may be taught for its own sake. Here, I believe a mistake is made when phonics is conceived to be good for its own sake whether it assists pupils in reading well or not. Compare that line of thought with phonics being a tool to use when

needed to determine the word that is not being identified.

Sometimes, even with strong context clues, a pupil cannot identify an unknown word. Perhaps, in these cases, a pupil may unlock an unknown word through identifying the initial consonant and then using context clues. A strong case can be made for emphasizing phonics as needed. If a pupil then cannot identify a word after being given adequate opportunity to do so, the teacher may need to stress selective facets of phonics which are useful here, such as the initial consonant "m" when the word "modify" is encountered and not identified. There is that teachable moment when the teacher needs to emphasize what is salient and in this case, a phonetic element. Phonics also may be taught in the context of basal reader use. Thus, when pupils are to read a story or selection from the basal, the teacher may print on the chalkboard in neat manuscript style the new words pupils will encounter when they are to read silently or orally. Generally, these new words will come from the manual section of the basal. The teacher points to each new word as he/she and the pupils pronounce them. This procedure may be used more than once per lesson if the need exists. The point is that pupils should be able to recognize these same words when reading. It still will be necessary as the act of reading is in evidence for the teacher or a good reader to pronounce words not known to the reader. The pupil needs to be helped after allowing five seconds, in general, before the unknown word is pronounced. Pupils not knowing a word should attempt to the best possible to determine it during these approximate five seconds. When pupils have ample opportunities to see the new words in neat manuscript print, prior to oral or silent reading, the chances are they will identify many of these in the ongoing reading experience.

What about a phonics program that has a scope and sequence of its very own? Pupils should realize that a consonant sound is made with an obstruction by the speaker between the throat and the lips. This is true of all consonant sounds. When thinking about the teaching of single consonants, the teacher or committee of teachers need to decide when

these should be taught. There are individual consonant letters that are very consistent with their individual sounds. the following consonants are very consistent between grapheme/phoneme-- b,d, f, h, j, l, m, n, p, r. s, t, v, w, and y. With high frequency of use, i would stress the importance of pupils learning the following consonants: b, d, m, n, p, r,s, t, and w. These consonants have very few exceptions to being consistent between symbol and sound. The following are some exceptions:

1. the letter "b" is silent in the word "debt."
2. the letter "p" is silent in the word "pneumonia."
3. the letter "s" sounds like a "z" in the word "resides."
4. the letter "w" has a "wh" sound in words such as "why." "what," and "when." When I was an undergraduate student in a teaching of reading class, the instructor mentioned strongly that the "wh" sound is made with pronouncing the "w" and then at the same time blowing the light out on a candle. I thing in most cases we cannot distinguish between the two initial consonant of "w" with the words "where," and "when."

In context, then, single consistent consonants, between symbol and sound, need to be taught. These are very helpful for learners to use in addition to context clues to unlock unknown words. Functional use should be made of these consonants. They are not to be learned for their own sake, but rather for application and use.

Short vowel sounds are next in importance for pupils to study. The consonant/vowel/consonant pattern are relatively easy for many pupils. These sounds are common in such words as the following: run, sun, and bun. These words pattern with a short "u" sound. Ran, ban, and man pattern with the short "a' sound. Hen, men, and pen pattern with the short "e" sound. Sit, pit, and hit pattern for the short "I" sound. Cot, lot, and tot pattern with the short "o" sound.

Long vowel sounds can have a pattern when taught to pupils. For example, there are numerous words that follow the consonant/vowel/consonant/silent "e" (CVC silent e) pattern, such as

bake, cake, make, fake, sake, and lake. Vowel digraphs include sail, pail, mail, and rail. Here, there are two vowel letters that come together with the first being long and the second silent in sound.

Initial consonant digraphs taught by the teacher may assist many pupils to become proficient in word recognition. Generally, two consonant letters make for one sound. These individual letters cannot be taken apart and make sense, such as the following: "th" as in thought; "sh" as in shine; "ch" as in chair; and "ph" as in phone. The words listed here for the consonant digraphs are commonly used words. The consonant digraphs listed are used very frequently. Within context, there are pupils who need assistance here since the separate letters do not make for consistency between symbol and sound.

Ending consonant digraphs are more difficult for pupils to master as compared to those coming in the beginning. Many pupils have been guided to improve reading through identification of ending consonant digraphs such as: ch as in bench,, sh as in push,and th as in width. Games may always be played with pupils to see if they can provide additional words that have a beginning or ending consonant digraph. I observed a student teacher and her cooperating teacher have pupils brainstorm consonant blends and pupils wanted the lesson to continue beyond closing time. There was excitement and interest in continually naming more consonant blends.

Consonant blends or clusters are made up of two or three letters, each making its separate sound. The sounds come rather close together. There are pupils who have difficulty making these blends of two consecutive letters with their individual sounds. Here are some common blends: bl as in blow, blend, and blue; cr as in cry, crystal, and crow; fr such as in fruit, frail, and fry; sn such as in snow, snail, and snake; and str such ass in street, stray, and strike.

Phonograms are interesting for many pupils to experiment with. Phonograms are short words found within a larger word. Examples of pupils discovering phonograms are the following: at as in hat, eat as in seat, and ate as in skate. Sometimes a new "unknown" word is not

impossible to identify. Thus, the word may appear unknown, but the learner knows enough about phonograms that he/she can identify the word correctly.

There are pupils who face an "unknown" word until they notice familiarities therein, such as a prefix. There are very common prefixes that hold true quite consistently. These include un meaning not such as unpopular, and im meaning not such as in impolite. The unfamiliar becomes familiar when pupils notice suffixes such as less as in childless, and ful such as in cupful. By noticing the familiar such as the root word, and adding either the prefix and/or suffix, many pupils can determine what the new word is.

Diphthongs may cause selected pupils problems in word recognition. Why? Here are two vowel letters that are together and yet their sound is different then any short or long vowel sound as well as being different in pronunciation. The following are examples: oil (the oi letters make a unique sound), and oy as in oyster (the oy make a unique sound also). These sounds are not like the individual letters or like a short or long vowel sound would make.

Another problem in sound/symbol relationships are words governed by a final "r." Notice the following words: fir, fur, fer, a syllable as in transfer. The first word "fir" refers to a fir tree. The second "fur" refers to the hair on an animal, such as "The dog had shaggy fur." The third 'fer' is common as a suffix to many words. Sometimes, there are no governing principles in analyzing an unknown word. With the sight method in oral cooperative reading by pupils and the teacher, an unknown word becomes a known word. The following words, for example, follow a spelling pattern, but their individual pronunciations certainly do not: though, through, tough, bough, cough, and dough. These words are spelled in an irregular manner and must be learned as sight words, even though a spelling pattern is there.

I am generally opposed in teaching phonics prior to the time it is needed. To be functional, phonics should be taught when the need arises. Thus when a pupil is reading silently or orally, he/she may

need assistance on word identification. There is that teachable moment in time when a pupil might well benefit from selected phonics learnings. Thus, if a pupil is reading, "The Henry family liked to take -------- during holidays," the pupil may not know the word in the blank space. When using context clues, there are many words that would fit in according to meaning theory. The words that do not begin with the correct initial consonant can then be eliminated. If the pupil does not know the sound that goes along with the initial consonant letter, he/she may now be taught the grapheme/phoneme correspondence.

There is another suitable time to teach phonics and that is when learners may see patterns pertaining to the word not identified in oral or silent reading. Not always, of course, are there patterns in evidence. But, when a pupil does not identify the word "soil" in reading, he/she may be assisted to notice words which pattern such as boil, toil, and spoil. The patterns approach has helped many pupils to identify unknown words when reading. Then too, a pupil who does not identify the word "soil" when reading may be asked to give other words that begin like "s" or end like "l." Why is this important? The teacher may then appraise if the pupil can see and hear these phonemes/graphemes.

The question always arises as to the teaching of phonics to pupils who truly cannot hear sounds A colleague of mine as a sophomore in college in teacher education could not hear sounds. He was an avid reader and comprehended well. At the time he was doing student teaching during his sophomore year for a sixty hour certificate in the early 1950s, he was called down during a lesson taught. The calling down occurred in front of pupils being taught. The student teacher had stated in the elementary school class that a vowel sound in reading was long when actually it was a short vowel sound. My colleague felt very badly for this happening, and was ready to quit student teaching. At the last moment he decided to continue and be certified with a sixty hour certificate for teaching. My colleague had taught for forty-two years at the time he was dying of cancer. His teaching was done on the fifth and sixth grade levels where phonics instruction in reading was minimal. He

seemed to have done well as a classroom teacher. This teacher should no doubt rely very heavily upon whole language approaches when teaching pupils. This might not always be possible when the pendulum swings to a heavy dose of phonics for all pupils. One thing my colleague did during his teaching years was to mark vowel sounds carefully before each day of teaching. He checked with a dictionary as to the accuracy of the marking.

## Basic Principles in Teaching Phonics

There are basic principles that teachers should adhere to when teaching phonics to primary and intermediate grade pupils.

1. Pupils should be ready for the new lessons to be taught. This would include learners having an attention span adequate in duration. They should be able to hear likenesses and differences in sound.

2. Pupils should experience lessons in phonics that are taught in an interesting manner. This would mean that drill would be greatly minimized and stimulating games would receive primary emphasis in the teaching of phonics.

3. Pupils need to experience sequence in ongoing lessons and units of study. One of the most important factors in teaching is that pupils perceive learning activities as being sequentially more difficult and yet readiness is there for attaining goals in phonics instruction.

4. Pupils need to be attentive during the time phonics is taught. If pupils are not attentive, they will not benefit from ongoing instruction. A teaching strategy needs to be in evidence whereby pupils develop and maintain their attentiveness.

5. Pupils should experience success in learning. If pupils experience failure, the chances are they will not benefit much from phonics instruction.

6. Pupils should receive feedback on how well they are achieving in phonics instruction. In this way, pupils know what they need to concentrate on in phonics lessons.

7. The teacher needs to monitor pupil progress in phonics. Thus,

there are indications that pupils are achieving and learning if careful monitoring is done.

8. Pupils need to use what has been learned in phonics; otherwise phonics may be learned for its own sake. The only reason for teaching phonics is for pupils to become capable readers and spellers. Knowledge needs to be used and application made to new situations encountered.

9. Pupils need to assist each other in learning about and using phonics in reading instruction.

10. Pupils should appraise themselves personally to notice progress in phonics knowledge acquired and application made.

11. Teachers need to evaluate themselves to notice what pupils have achieved and work for improved instruction.

12. Objectives chosen for phonics instruction need to be relevant and achievable by learners.

13. Learning opportunities in phonics should provide for individual differences regardless of ability levels and socioeconomic status.

14. evaluation techniques should be aligned with the stated objectives so that the objectives provide direction for instruction.

15. The phonics program needs to be assessed frequently and modified to provide the best instruction possible for each pupil.

I need to emphasize again that phonics should be taught as a means to an end, not an end in and of itself. The end being to produce readers who enjoy reading and like to solve problems through the act of reading.

## Philosophies of Phonics Instruction

There are diverse philosophies of education stating how phonics should be taught. One philosophy stresses the basics idea whereby there is essential information that needs to be taught to all pupils. Phonics is conceived to be the basics by selected authors in education as well as teachers. These individuals believe that phonics is rather

consistent between symbol and sound. Thus, the grapheme/phoneme correspondence makes it so that teachers can be certain that consistencies do exist between symbol and sound as pupils learn to read.

Advocates of the basics believe that there is a core of phonics principles and generalizations that pupils should learn and use. More people then would learn to read than ever before, according to advocates. A strong scope in phonics needs to be identified. The scope or breadth of phonics content to be taught needs to be identified. Specialists in phonics instruction should be on committees to choose what is salient to teach pertaining to phonics. These phonics learnings might be graded so that pupils and parents would know what the minimal level of achievement should be for pupils to achieve on a grade level or at the end of a semester. The determining of when phonics objectives should be emphasized in teaching stresses the concept of sequence. Thus, there are phonics objectives that would be taught on the kindergarten, first, and/or second grade level. There are teachers who emphasize a very strong program of phonics instruction with a well developed scope and sequence.

Reasons given for a strong program in scope and sequence in phonics are the following:

1. the English alphabet is rather consistent in stressing each grapheme (symbol) equals a phoneme (sound).

2. the key to success in reading is becoming an independent reader and that is through the study and use of phonics.

3 once the graphemes/phonemes have been mastered, pupils can do more and more independent reading.

4. pupils can enjoy ideas in reading when studying and using phonics. It is not an either/or situation such as either studying and using phonics versus obtaining ideas and enjoying reading.

5. phonics instruction can be made enjoyable with games and stimulating exercises. The teacher may use a phonics text or workbook in teaching and still promote pupil interest in learning to read.

There seems to be general agreement that good auditory and visual discrimination are prerequisites for learning sound-symbol relationships. We know that children must be able to distinguish one letter from another and one sound from another before they can associate a given letter with a specific sound. Visual discrimination refers to the ability to distinguish likenesses from differences among letters, and auditory discrimination refers to the ability to distinguish likenesses and differences among sounds. To achieve these skills, children must first understand the concepts of like and different among forms. Also to achieve auditory discrimination, children must first have phonemic awareness, or the awareness that speech is composed of separate sounds (phonemes).They must be able to hear sounds within words, or they will be unable to form mental connections between sounds and letters (as quoted in Burns, Ross, and Roe, 1996, page 114).

Somewhat toward the opposite end of the continuum, there are teachers who believe in holism, only, in the teaching of reading. They stress pupils reading the entire story or reading selection without having lessons on phonics. These teachers believe that phonics instruction destroys interest in reading. Thus, pupils with teacher assistance should read the selection together. In this way, all pupils can orally read the content and identify all words. Rereading is also stressed so that pupils and the teacher read over again the same selection. Generally stories chosen are quite predictable in that pupils have some idea of what will occur in sequence. Predictability of content assists pupils to ascertain what the unknown words are in pronunciation and in meaning.

Individualized reading is a holistic approach in reading instruction. The teacher here needs to have a rather large supply of library books from which each pupil will select sequential content to read. Learners generally select sequential books to read that are interesting and on their own unique reading level. Positive attitudes should be an important end result since pupils choose to read what is personally interesting and on their individual reading level. After the completion of

reading a library book, a conference is held with the teacher to determine comprehension and reading skills of the pupil. Attention is paid to phonics individually or in a committee when pupils reveal a need for help. It is important to notice that pupils reveal help needed as they read orally to the teacher a chosen selection. Assistance is provided pupils then as the need arises in reading and not before any selection is to be read.

Reasons given for using whole language approaches in teaching phonics within a quality reading program are the following:

1. pupils learn phonetic elements within context as library books are read and holistic procedures in reading are emphasized.

2. ideas acquired are the major ingredients of a good reading program for pupils. With interest and purpose in reading, the pupil hurdles many difficulties in reading, including associating sounds with symbols.

3. pupils need to read to become better readers, not study phonics for its own sake.

4. the whole is greater (content in reading) than the sum of the parts (phonics).

5. phonics is a tool to be used to obtain ideas from reading, not an end in and of itself.

In a psychological reading curriculum which is child centered, the pupil is strongly involved in selecting objectives, learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures. This is the heart of a pupil centered curriculum in reading. Humanism as a psychology of learning is then being emphasized. A humane reading curriculum , according to its advocates, stresses the individual learner being involved in decision making in the reading curriculum. The pupil is at the center of developing the reading curriculum (Ediger, 1997).

## Behaviorism and the Reading Curriculum

Behaviorism a a psychology has had much influence in education.

With behaviorism, objectives for pupil achievement are stated prior to instruction and in measurable terms. Teachers can even announce prior to teaching what pupils are to learn from the lesson. It is very precisely written in the objective as to what each pupil is to learn. The learning activities are aligned with the objectives. The teacher then ultimately measures, after instruction, what pupils have achieved that was stated in the objectives. A pupil either achieves or does not achieve an objective since each is stated very precisely. Reasons given for using behaviorally stated objectives in teaching are the following:

1. learning standards are written with precision so there is certainty in knowing what pupils are to learn or have learned.

2. careful selection is given to objectives when each is very important and carefully defined in measurable terms.

3. clarity is involved when communicating pupil results to parents. The results can be given in numerical terms.

4. much attention can be paid to sequencing of objectives so that pupils experience as much success in learning as possible.

5. pupils may receive continuous feedback on how well they are achieving.

Phonics objectives for pupil attainment may be stated precisely or behaviorally. Careful selection of phonetic elements to be taught needs to be inherent in the stated objectives. A good teaching strategy needs to be in the offing so that pupils may achieve the sequential objectives. The teacher ultimately appraises pupil achievement to notice if objectives have been achieved.

## In Conclusion

There are numerous decisions to make in the teaching of reading. First, which objectives should pupils achieve? There are implications here for stressing holistic approaches in teaching of reading versus analytical procedures. The objectives chosen will reflect one's beliefs pertaining to the teaching of reading. Under which conditions do pupils learn to read best? Second, which learning opportunities should be

selected so that pupils will achieve the stated objectives? This includes the role of the basal textbook in the teaching of reading. In addition to basals, there are many other materials in reading instruction as learning opportunities such as the use of CD ROMS, computer packages (drill and practice, tutorial, games, simulations, and diagnostic approaches), Big Books, picture books, library books, encyclopedias, filmstrips and slides with accompanying print materials, among others.

Third, how should the reading curriculum be organized? There are numerous procedures available such as a separate subjects approach involving reading and literature only; correlation such as reading/language arts and social studies taught as being related; fused curriculum such as reading/language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics, taught as being related. The interdisciplinary reading curriculum integrates subject mater from all disciplines of knowledge. Problem solving procedures are best to use in interdisciplinary approaches in instruction. Regardless of the academic discipline, that subject mater is used which assists in solving a problem.

The role of the reading teacher is to stimulate pupils to to identify problems within the framework of a stimulating environment. After a problem has been clearly identified, related information is gathered to solve the identified problem...Based on the data, a hypothesis is developed in answer to the problem. The hypothesis needs to be specific so that it can be tested. The hypothesis is tentative, not an absolute. With further reading experiences, as well as use of audio-visual activities, the pupil with teacher guidance tests the hypothesis. The hypothesis, as a result of testing, may be accepted as is, refuted, or modified...Problem solving skills are usable in all curriculum areas, as well as in the societal arena..

Curiosity of the learner is salient when he/she selects a library book to read. With curiosity, interest accrues. Interest in a particular topic may well spur pupils on to a greater desire to read (Ediger, 1997, page 32),

Fourth, how should pupil achievement be evaluated? There are

many techniques to use in evaluating pupil progress in reading. These include standardized and norm referenced tests, teacher written tests, teacher observation, anecdotal records, checklists and rating scales, pupil self evaluation, as well as peer appraisal. The purpose of evaluation is to determine how well the pupil is achieving in reading. A philosophy of constructivism in evaluation may also be emphasized in that pupils reveal in context what has been achieved in word recognition techniques and in comprehension. This can provide feedback to the teacher and the pupil in deciding upon what he/she needs to emphasize as objectives.

A quality reading program then stresses the following:

1. Each pupil begins at a point where he/she is ready to achieve as optimally as possible.

2. The learner experiences continual progress successfully in reading.

3. The four vocabularies--listening, speaking, reading, and writing - are integrated in a quality reading program.

4. Word recognition skills, such as phonics, syllabication, context clues, and structural analysis, are taught within a framework of interesting content to be read.

5. Major emphasis is placed upon reading literature, not analyzing words into component parts.

6. Multimedia approaches are used to motivate pupils so that an inward desire in learning to read is inherent.

7. Problem solving, critical and creative thinking, as well as application are salient concepts stressed in teaching reading.

8. The best sequence is used to guide each pupil toward optimum achievement in reading.

9. Learning to read as a life time endeavor is stressed.

10. The use of relevant research results is important in the teaching of reading (Ediger, 1997, page 37).

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